Books — and Authors

Some Stumble, Some Bumble, But . . .

SOMEBODY'S STILL AWAKE

THERE HAVE BEEN innumerable articles and books on the deficiences of the American educational system, but Vice-Admiral H. G. Rickover's "Education and Freedom" (Dutton & Co.), illuminates the murky scene like a lighthouse in a fog.

In his preface to the book Edward R. Murrow writes, "Admiral Rickover is more than a naval officer who pushed through a crash program of building nuclear power plants. He is greater than that. He is a prophet and a leader."

At the beginning of the atomic era Rickover plunged into nuclear physics and engineering and gathered around him a working force of specialists. Men of their calibre, however, were hard to find since educators had not trained young people for the atomic era.

"We would be wise to investigate how Europe educates her children," Mr. Rickover writes, "for she prepares them better than we do for the more difficult life we may expect in the future."

Several chapters are devoted to the dismal future of the United States if they do not discover artificial, man-made substitutes to replace the dwindling natural resources—iron, coal, oil, food, lumber. Americans are the world's worst spendthrifts.

"If we continue to expand our consumption of raw materials at the same pace for the next 25 years our needs would reach a fantastic 80 per cent of total world production, leaving only 20 per cent for all other countries."

What may happen to Americans in the next half century is almost too alarming to contemplate, for they have the highest increase in population of the large industrial nations of the world.

However, the heart and centre of Rickover's book is the U.S. failure to educate their youth for a new world of science and dedication to the realities of today and the near future—which will indeed be grim unless they wake up. They must have more schools, and more teachers.

He illustrates his point in plain language. For example, 11,000 babies are born every day in the U.S.; they will need a million extra desks in elementary schools, 875,000 in high schools and more than a quarter of a million places in our colleges.

In addition, U.S. students require two or three years longer to attain the same level of education as those in European countries, where, incidentally, children are taught several foreign languages. It

ADMIRAL RICKOVER

is true that U.S. schools and colleges are the most expensive in the world. Yet it is common knowledge that U.S. teachers at all educational levels are underpaid, and there are not enough schools and colleges. Since the U.S. spends $50 billion a year for capital investment in various enterprises and $14 billions for the family car, would it be asking too much to pay one and a half billions for new schools?

"We are now engulfed in the scientific revolution," Rickover writes. "The man of today is still subservient to non-technical leaders in government and industry and his work is hampered and sometimes destroyed by men of great power who cannot understand the realities of the new age."

Admiral Rickover should know; he had to fight his way through them to develop dedicated scientists and technicians before he was allowed to build the atomic submarine.

2,000-Year-Old Dream

ISRAEL'S STORY NOVEL'S COLOR

By WILLIAM D. PATTERSON

THE JEWISH DREAM of 2,000 years that finally came true with the founding of the state of Israel is certainly one of modern humanity's epics, a tale still filled with sound and fury as invincible hope in the embattled land of Galilee.

It is good, therefore, to report that a splendid, perhaps even a great novel, has been written about this epic fulfillment of an ancient dream. "Exodus," by Leon Uris (Doubleday) is this novel, written on a heroic scale about the ennobling and horrifying struggle that ended in the birth of Israel.

In recent years the big novel of social history has been missing from the literary scene as our authors either narrowed their focus to a slice of life or turned it in upon themselves. They have produced literature, but not of this genre, not since "The Wall," by John Hersey.

These 626 pages are crowded with melodrama and drama, with history and heroes, with men and women in love and others, too, dedicated to a vision to bother with love.

It is a story that has a monumental sweep of time and space throughout, an achievement.

The opening sequences of "Exodus" may be disturbing to a discriminating reader, for they are awkwardly contrived, people with rather obvious characters in stereotyped postures, and rather clumsily written. In fact, Mr. Uris is a rather clumsy writer, a literary fault which he overcomes with the power of his purpose and his strong sense of plot and action.

He sets the stage for melodrama and then steadily rises to the level of drama as his story unfolds from the opening in 1946 on the troubled island of Cyprus, where the British have established temporary compounds for the Jewish refugees of the Second World War, and more especially for Jews caught by the British naval blockade trying to immigrate illegally to Palestine.

The agents of the Jewish underground — the Mossad Aliyah Bet—are active on Cyprus under the inspired leadership of one of the heroes of the novel, Ari Ben Canaan. They are determined to break the blockade and to make the British shift their policy on Palestine.

This they do.

But it is the tremendous canvas of the struggle itself, the cause of all European Jewry, from the Polish ghettos and Hitler's concentra-

LEON URIS

tion camps, from the harsh Russia of the czars and commissars, that the author spreads so forcefully and dramatically before the reader. This is a history of a doomed cause and culture that finally triumph in one of the great sagas of modern times.

Many of the personal stories, the complex gallery of characters arrayed for their rendezvous with history, enlist the interest of the reader, but it is the drama of the event itself from the first breaking of the British blockade to the moment when the new state hurls back the invading Arab armies, that make this book achieve the dimensions of an epic.

thenticity and power to "Exodus," and has helped build another success for the author of the highly successful "Battle Cry," a first novel which also became a hit movie.

Born in Baltimore in 1924, Uris is now living in California with his wife and three children.

On that level the reader is able to forgive the literary faults.

These faults are flaws, but in the ultimate judgment they do not weaken an achievement which warms the heart, informs the mind and inspires the spirit of the reader.

★ ★ ★

Leon Uris wrote his latest novel out of the very roots of his own first-hand experience and observation during visits to Denmark, Italy, Cyprus and Iran for historical background and more than 12,000 miles of travel within the borders of Israel for the living feel of his subject.

He lived in the cities and fields, hills and deserts of Israel, interviewing the varied citizenry of the new state. He was a war corresponding during the Sinai campaign of the Israel-Arab conflict.

It is this approach which undoubtedly gives such au-

THE STAMP PACKET By R. M. ANGUS

African Issues

On Jan. 26 Aden released two stamps to commemorate introduction of a revised and more advanced constitution. The current 15c and Sh. 1/25c stamps are overprinted in red, with the words "Revised Constitution 1959." The overprinting is by Waterlow and Sons Ltd., and is in Arabic on the 15c stamp and English on the Sh. 1/25c stamp.

It has also been announced by the Crown agents that Ghana will issue a set of three stamps on Feb. 12 in honor of the 150th birthday of Abraham Lincoln. They will be of the 21/2d, 1/3 and 2/6 denominations, and will all bear the same design, Prime Minister of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah standing before the Lincoln Memorial. Designer is Michael Goaman, London. Printing will be in two-color photogravure by Harrison and Sons, London, on paper watermarked with the five pointed star of Ghana and the letter "G." Dimensions will be 29¾ by 40 mm.

The installation of the Sultan of Kedah will be commemorated on Feb. 20 when Malaya issues a 10-cent stamp which has been ordered for the State of Keda, according to information from Lee Chin Teck.

He also writes that the 10-cent Coronation stamps of Singapore and Malaya, bearing the portrait of the Queen, will become invalid for use effective July 1. This stamp was withdrawn from sale in December, 1953.

CRIME CORNER

The Deadly Pay-off. By William H. Duhart. Gold Medal.

Milwaukee is scene of orthodox toughie number wherein Tank Tabor, wonder boy type, mixed with hoods, racketeers, drug peddlers, molls and all the usual personnel and paraphernalia.